RUMFORD

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION,

WOBURN, MASS.

INCORPORATED 1877.

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OFFICERS OF THE RUMFORD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION,

MARCH 26, 1892.

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HON. JOHN CUMMINGS.

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Abijah Thompson	. . .	of Winchester.
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Hon. Edward Everett Thompson,		of Woburn.
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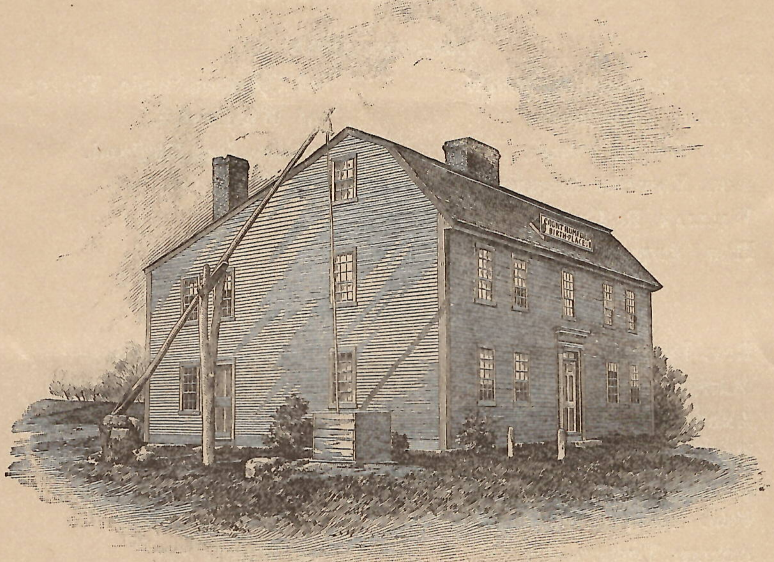
LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

Charles Nichols. Warren B. Perkins. William R. Cutter.

LIBRARIAN AND CUSTODIAN.

Warren B. Perkins.


BIRTH-PLACE

THE RUMFORD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

THE RUMFORD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION has as yet had only a brief history; but, to many persons in Woburn, and to a much larger number in other places, a few items from even this short history may be of interest.

BENJAMIN THOMPSON

COUNT OF RUMFORD.

In January, 1873, a lecture was given in the Lyceum Course at Woburn, by Rev. William S. Barnes, upon the Life of Count Rumford, the one native of the town who had achieved a celebrity as wide as the civilized world. Referring, in one of his concluding

sentences, to the old mansion in the North Village of the town, in which the boy, Benjamin Thompson, who became the distinguished Count, was born in 1753, he said: "I could wish that Woburn would take measures to preserve that interesting property to a future that will think more of such relics than we."

Previous to the date of this lecture, individuals had often privately expressed a similar wish, but this is believed to be the first public intimation, ever uttered in Woburn, that the old Rumford House, now rapidly going to decay, might be, or should be, rescued and preserved, as an appropriate memorial of the illustrious scientist who there found his first home. A few persons immediately began to investigate and to plan. After considerable delay and not a few apparent discouragements, it was ascertained that the house was not only in a very ruinous condition, but likely shortly to exchange owners, and be early doomed to destruction. Accordingly, a paper was drawn up stating the facts, the sum of money needed for the purchase of the place as it was, and the object in view, and also soliciting such aid in the enterprise as any friends in Woburn or elsewhere might be disposed to contribute.

The effort met with a degree of success far beyond the expectations of any one. Contributions from a large number of persons in Woburn were promptly made, and, by means of correspondence, the sum thus secured was soon considerably increased by remittances from various friends elsewhere in Massachusetts, in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and in London, England. The sums given varied from a single dollar upward to nearly $300. To the gratification of all, the purchase was made, and on the twenty-sixth day of March, the 124th birthday of Count Rumford, the Rumford Historical Association was organized, and, as soon as the necessary preliminary arrangements could be made, was incorporated in accordance with the laws of Massachusetts.

Since the organization was effected, a considerable sum of money has, at different times, been raised and expended on such repairs upon the house as seemed most urgently needed. This work is not yet complete, but that which remains to be done can be more safely postponed, if necessary, than that part of it which has been done.

It has from the first been the settled purpose of the Association to proceed no faster and no farther than their means on hand or in immediate prospect would justify. On no account will they consent to incur a debt; nor do they intend, in the work of repair, to do anything that shall change the antique style and finish of the

building. They propose, indeed, nothing except what may be necessary to its preservation and safety.

That part of the object of the Association which relates to the collection and preservation, for exhibition or use, of books, manuscripts, objects of antiquarian interest, and whatever may illustrate the life and times, and perpetuate the memory, of Rumford, has been steadily kept in view, and a fair beginning has been made.

The Rumford Library, now in the possession of the Association as a free library, is a choice collection, numbering about 1,500 volumes, and the evidences of its increasing usefulness are very gratifying.

It is neither possible nor proper, in this brief sketch, to go into the details of the history of the Association; but its friends everywhere may be fairly assured that, considering the obstacles to be met and overcome, and the limited means at its disposal, a measure of success has attended its brief career quite as large as could reasonably be expected. Its mission is not yet completed.

WOBURN, June 16, 1881.

It will be seen that the foregoing sketch of the Rumford Historical Association was written and printed nearly eleven years ago. In a new Manual in 1892 it may properly be added that the Association, though at no time noisily proclaiming its prosperity, has enjoyed a steady increase of usefulness, in various ways, to the present time. Every year has added to our collection one or more valuable historical papers, given, either publicly or privately, at an appointed time. Beside this, individual members, stimulated by the general aims of the Association, have engaged with fresh zeal in research, and have contributed, in various departments of our local history, a large amount of interesting detail.

Meanwhile our library, though never an object of primary interest, has gradually increased in value, and our "antiques" and "curios" have gained in number and interest each year. A bequest of five hundred dollars from the late Mrs. Abigail Winn has furnished the means of making some needed repairs and changes in the Rumford House, besides a reserve for future demands.

In view of the past of the Rumford Historical Association, it may, in this fifteenth year of its history, modestly be said that it has accomplished quite as much as, if not even more than, it had reason to expect. And there are now more urgent and more promising inducements than ever to advance in our chosen department of historical labor.

WOBURN, March 26, 1892.

CONSTITUTION.

Article I.

This Corporation shall be called the Rumford Historical Association.

Article II.

The object of this Corporation shall be to hold and preserve a certain lot of land, with the buildings situated thereon, in Woburn, known as the birth-place of Benjamin Thompson, or Count Rumford; also, to collect and preserve for exhibition or use, books, manuscripts, objects of antiquarian interest, and whatever may illustrate the life and times, and perpetuate the memory, of the distinguished man whose title is prominently associated with our organization. (See amendment, page 11.)

Article III.

This Corporation shall be composed of resident, life, corresponding, and honorary members.

Article IV.

Resident, honorary, and corresponding members, having been nominated by the Board of Directors, shall be elected by ballot, at any stated meeting, by a majority of the votes cast.

Article V.

Every person elected a member of the Corporation shall become such by signifying his acceptance to the Corresponding Secretary, in writing; and any member may withdraw from it at any time, by certifying his intention of so doing to the Recording Secretary, in writing, and paying all dues to the Treasurer.

Article VI.

Each resident member of the Corporation, elected after April 6, 1887, shall pay into the treasury, on his admission, the sum of five dollars. (See amendment, page 11.)

Article VII.

The payment of five dollars, in addition to his admission fee, shall constitute any resident member, or corresponding member, a life member; life members shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of resident members.

Article VIII.

The Officers of this Corporation shall be a President; six Vice-Presidents; a Corresponding Secretary; a Treasurer, who shall be a Recording Secretary and Clerk of the Corporation, and who shall be elected from the Board of Directors; a Library Committee of three; a Librarian, who shall be general custodian; and a Board of seven Trustees, who shall act as a Board of Directors. All of the officers, with the exception of the Board of Trustees and Directors, shall be chosen by ballot, and shall hold office for one year, or until their successors are elected.

Article IX.

The Corporation shall hold a meeting annually, for the choice of officers and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before it, on the 26th of March, or the first week-day following, at the Rumford Birth-place, in North Woburn. Other meetings may be called from time to time by the President and Board of Trustees, as they may deem necessary.

Article X.

The Board of Trustees — who shall elect their successors by a majority vote, taken by ballot — shall consist of seven members, the majority of whom shall be residents of Woburn. They shall be empowered to hold in trust and preserve all and every property of the Corporation, and legally represent the Corporation.

Article XI.

By-laws of the Corporation may be made or amended by a vote of three fourths of the members present and voting at any meeting, notice of the same having been given, in writing, at a previous meeting of the Corporation, and entered upon the records.

Article XII.

No alteration shall be made in that article of the Constitution which relates to the election, powers, and perpetuity of the Board of Trustees. Any other article of the Constitution may be altered

or amended at any meeting, by a vote of three fourths of the members present and voting; provided a written recommendation of such change, signed by at least five members, shall have been given at a previous meeting, and entered upon the records.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

1st Amendment. *Voted*, To amend Article II. of the Constitution by adding to it, "Or whatever may relate to other matters of general historical interest." (See Art. II., page 9.)

2d Amendment. *Voted*, To amend Article VI. by striking out "five dollars" and inserting "one dollar" in its place. (See Art. VI., page 9.)

BY-LAWS.

Art. I. Duties of Members.

It shall be regarded as the duty of the members of the Corporation to manifest their interest in its objects by such inquiries, investigations, collections, and deposits, from time to time, as their opportunities may allow.

Art. II. Written Communications and Deposits.

All written communications and deposits shall be deemed the property of the Corporation, unless the right to such be specially reserved, in writing, by their authors and depositors.

Art. III. Library and Museum.

The General Library shall be under the control of the Library Committee, and shall be open for the use of all the members of the Corporation, and other persons not members, subject to the rules and regulations of the Library Committee. Manuscripts, books, and pamphlets, kept for reference or exhibition, with articles deposited with the Corporation, shall not be taken from the building, except by permission of the Board of Directors.

Art. IV. Directors and Committees.

A majority of Directors and Standing Committees shall severally constitute a quorum of their respective bodies.

Art. V. Corresponding Secretary.

It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to conduct the general correspondence of the Corporation, to place on file all letters received, to enter the names of members systematically in books kept for the purpose, and to issue certificates of membership.

Art. VI. Treasurer.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to take charge of all moneys belonging to the Corporation; to collect all fees and taxes; to pay all bills against the Corporation, when approved by the Board of Trustees; to keep a full account of receipts and expenditures, in a

book belonging to the Corporation; to invest the funds of the Corporation, with the consent and approval of the Board of Trustees; and, at the annual meeting, to make a full and detailed report, in writing, and at such other times as may be required by said Board.

Art. VII. Recording Secretary.

It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary to make a full and explicit record of all the proceedings of the Corporation at its meetings; and the minutes so made shall be read at the succeeding meeting for the correction of errors, and afterwards entered as the permanent record of the Corporation, in a book kept for that purpose.

Art. VIII. Librarian and Custodian.

It shall be the duty of the Librarian and Custodian to take charge of the books, pamphlets, manuscripts, and all other property belonging to, or deposited in, the library and museum; to classify and arrange the books and pamphlets for the convenient use of the members; keep a correct catalogue of the same; enter all donations in a book kept for that purpose, with a sufficient description thereof, the date of their reception, and the name of the donor, and in behalf of the Corporation make acknowledgment of the same by letter; to purchase books, when authorized by the Board of Directors and Trustees, to whom he shall be responsible for the proper discharge of his duties. He shall have the care of the rooms, and make all necessary preparation for the meetings of the Corporation.

Art. IX. Board of Directors and Trustees.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors and Trustees to superintend and conduct the prudential and executive business of the Corporation; to fix all salaries; to receive and act upon all resignations and forfeitures of membership; and to see that the Constitution and By-Laws are duly complied with.

Art. X. Committee on the Library.

It shall be the duty of the Committee on the Library to solicit donations of books, pamphlets, and manuscripts for the Corporation. The committee may, with the written consent of the Board of Directors, make donations and exchanges of duplicate copies of books and pamphlets; and they shall make a full record of all donations and exchanges in a book kept for that purpose; and, at the annual meeting, shall submit in writing a detailed report of their proceedings.

NAMES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE RUMFORD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

*Hon. CHARLES CHOATE	Woburn.
Hon. JOHN CUMMINGS	"
Hon. EDWARD D. HAYDEN	"
LEONARD THOMPSON	"
MARSHALL TIDD	"
Rev. LEANDER THOMPSON	"
*EVERETT A. THOMPSON	"
CHARLES NICHOLS	"
WARREN B. PERKINS	"
JAMES McFEELEY	"
*NATHAN WYMAN	"
*RUEL CARTER	"
ANDREW R. LINSCOTT	"
GARWIN R. GAGE	"
EDWARD SIMONDS	"
THOMAS H. HILL	Florence, Ala.
*Dr. JOHN CLOUGH	Woburn.
*STEPHEN NICHOLS	"
JACOB LINSCOTT	"
OLIVER F. BRYANT	"
*JAMES P. TYLER	"
*Mrs. HARRIET BROOKS	"
*THOMAS RICHARDSON	"
*GEORGE M. CHAMPNEY	"
Rev. WILLIAM S. BARNES	Montreal, Dom. C.
*ALFRED G. CARTER	Woburn.
*Mrs. CELENDE T. DOW	"
*CYRUS WOODMAN, Esq.	Cambridge.
WILLIAM R. CUTTER	Woburn.
JAMES PIERCE	Malden.
*EBENEZER RUMFORD THOMPSON, Esq.	Dunkirk, N. Y.
*GEORGE RUMFORD BALDWIN	Woburn.
Hon. JOSIAH PIERCE	London, England.
DANIEL THOMPSON	Parish of St. Mary, La.
FRED. A. FLINT	Woburn.
GEORGE W. M. HALL	Allston.
MARCELLUS LITTLEFIELD	Woburn.
Rev. CHARLES ANDERSON	Constantinople, Turkey.
Rev. CHARLES W. THOMPSON	Westminster, Vt.
*Col. LEONARD THOMPSON	Woburn.
Hon. EDWARD E. THOMPSON	"

* Deceased.

SAMUEL TUFTS	Cambridge.
CHARLES W. SMITH	Woburn.
GEORGE W. POLLOCK	Brockton.
SPARROW HORTON	Woburn.
CHARLES M. STROUT	"
*GEORGE F. SMITH	"
*MONTRESSOR SEELEY	"
WILLIAM VAUGHN	"
*CHARLES R. THOMPSON	"
WILLIAM F. GREENOUGH	"
PATRICK McGOWAN	"
WALTER WYMAN	"
MILTON MOORE	"
P. ELVERTON BANCROFT	"
WALDO THOMPSON	Swampscott.
ALPHA E. THOMPSON	Woburn.
ALBERT THOMPSON	"
Dr. EPHRAIM CUTTER	New York, N. Y.
*Mrs. FREDERICK PARKER	Woburn.
JOHN JOHNSON	"
*WILLIAM ELLARD	"
J. W. HAMMOND	"
ABIJAH THOMPSON	"
*Mrs. PATTY FISHER	"
GEORGE PERRY	"
SARAH E. FISHER	"
DONALD MACFARLANE	"
Dr. J. P. ELLIOTT	Boston.
THOMAS EMERSON	"
Rev. VOLNEY M. SIMONDS	Worcester.
J. LEONARD FOWLE	Woburn.
Mrs. TIMOTHY WINN	"
Dr. FRANK W. GRAVES	"
S. FRANKSFORD TRULL	"
*MARK ALLEN	"
EDGAR B. THOMPSON	Chicago, Ill.
GEORGE W. NORRIS, Esq.	Woburn.
NATHANIEL S. WATSON	"
DANIEL W. BOND	"
ABIJAH THOMPSON	Winchester.
Mrs. MARIA S. THOMPSON	"
STEPHEN THOMPSON	"
Mrs. SARAH SNOW THOMPSON	"
*MARTHA LILLIAN THOMPSON	"
Mrs. FANNY G. ADAMS	Jacksonville, Fla.
WALTER C. THOMPSON	"
Rev. GEORGE JACKSON	Swampscott.
Mrs. ESTHER E. SMITH	Keene, N. H.
JOHN W. JOHNSON, Esq.	Woburn.
Hon. EDWARD F. JOHNSON	"

*Deceased.

Mrs. SARAH A. GILMAN	Boston.
FRANK B. RICHARDSON	Woburn.
EDWARD M. MUNYAN	Melrose.
JAMES THOMPSON	Hooksett, N. H.
Dr. JOSIAH P. BIXBY	Woburn.
HORACE W. THOMPSON	Bellows Falls, Vt.
EBEN FRANCIS THOMPSON, Esq.	Worcester.
MINOT J. BUCKMAN	Woburn.
*DANIEL KIMBALL	"
ABRAM RAND THOMPSON	Charlestown.
DAVID MELVILLE	Detroit, Mich.
Rev. DANIEL D. WINN	Brookline.
ROBERT J. W. PHINNEY	Woburn.
WILLIAM TIDD	Stoneham.
Mrs. SARAH C. PHINNEY	Woburn.
Mrs. ELLEN T. ELLIS	"
Rev. CHARLES H. WASHBURN	Falmouth.
FRANK S. KITTREDGE	Nashua, N. H.
SAMUEL A. THOMPSON	Woburn.
BENJAMIN F. KIMBALL	"
CHARLES G. THOMPSON	Richmond, Va.
CHARLES P. THOMPSON, U. S. NAVY	Washington, D. C.
WILLIAM I. THOMPSON	Worcester.
Dr. SAMUEL W. ABBOTT	Wakefield.
Rev. MARTIN L. RICHARDSON	Montague.

* Deceased.